

PLANNING COMMISSION

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Regular Meeting – May 28, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Michael Meehlhause called the regular meeting of the City of Bemidji Planning Commission to order at **5:30 p.m.** Roll call was taken, and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

Members present: Faver, Heinonen, Lemmer, McCoy, Meehlhause, Olderman (@ 5:31pm), Peterson (via WebEx due to personal reasons).

Members excused: None

Staff Present: Planning Director Jamin Carlson, Administrative Assistant Ainslee Krause

Others Present: Troy Gilchrist (via WebEx), Geri Hickerson, Northwoods Habitat for Humanity, Chris Hamilton, President of Habitat for Humanity Board.

AGENDA

Chair Meehlhause called for any amendments to the agenda. Motion by **Heinonen**, seconded by **Lemmer**, to approve the agenda. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

MINUTES

The minutes for the **April 23, 2026**, Planning Commission meeting were presented for approval. Motion by **Heinonen**, seconded by **Lemmer**, approving minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

VISITORS WITH BUSINESS NOT ON AGENDA: No appearance.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearings:

PLANNING CASE: MINOR SUBDIVISION PLAT REQUEST – MATT MURRAY REPRESENTING NORTHWOODS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY:

Carlson presented the planning case request: Matt Murray of Murray Surveying, representing Northwoods Habitat for Humanity, is requesting a Minor Subdivision Plat to replat Finseth's 2nd Addition to Nymore part of block 18 east of the vacated alleyway creating seven (7) additional parcels. The subject property is located between 4th St SE and 5th St SE off Lake Ave SE (PIN: 800390100) in the City of Bemidji. The property is in the R-4 Moderate Density Residential Zoning District.

Conclusions based on the Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan were presented in the packet including conditions and findings of fact.

Commission members made the following comments:

- Lemmer inquired about the quantity of comments received. Carlson replied.
- Olderman inquired what the comment was. Carlson replied.
- McCoy inquired about past use of the lot. Carlson replied.

Public Hearing

Pursuant to published notice, a public hearing was held regarding input on the request. Chair Meehlhause opened the Public Hearing at **5:38 PM**, hearing the following comments:

- Geri Hickerson addressed the Commission regarding how Habitat came to possess the property.
- Olderman inquired what type of housing would be built on the lots. Hickerson replied that it would be single-family owner-occupied housing.

- Lemmer inquired about the timeframe of Habitat building on all eight lots. Hickerson replied that no timeframe has been established and it depends upon demand.
- Peterson asked about homeowner applicant investment requirements for such projects. Hickerson replied that it was 300 hours.
- Olderman asked for clarification of the 300-hour requirement. Hickerson responded.
- Chris Hamilton addressed the Commission, asking for waiver of the City's Parkland Dedication Fee.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Meehlhause closed the Public Hearing at **5:43 PM**.

Chair Meehlhause asked for any additional comments from the Commission. Commission members made the following comments:

- Lemmer expressed support of Habitat for Humanity homes based on having two in her neighborhood.
- Peterson commented on the appreciation of the Habitat program by many people in the community.

Motion by **Heinonen**, seconded by **Peterson**, to recommend approval of the Minor Subdivision Plat request for parcel 800390100, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented in the packet.

- In the process of seconding the motion, Peterson also inquired about how the process of Parkland Dedication Fee waiver would work.
- Carlson and Gilchrist replied that it is a matter for Planning Board/City Council discussion.
- Gilchrist stated the Commission could add informal comments to the Board regarding the waiver.
- Chair Meehlhause inquired if Peterson's second of the motion stood. Peterson confirmed it did.

Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Ayes: **Peterson, Olderman, Meehlhause, McCoy, Lemmer, Heinonen, Faver**. Nays: **None**.

Chair Meehlhause addressed that the request would go before the Planning Board at their next meeting on **June 8, 2025**, at 5:30 PM for the final decision.

- Meehlhause inquired if the Commission wished to provide an informal recommendation regarding the Parkland Dedication Fee.
- Peterson inquired as to the dollar amount being waived. Carlson replied. Peterson suggested it be open to discussion.
- Chair Meehlhause asked Gilchrist for clarification of process. Gilchrist stated the Commission could add an informal recommendation either way, but that it was the Planning Board/City Council's decision to make.
- Meehlhause stated the Commission generally seemed in favor of waiving the fee and asked Hickerson if they had been waived in the past. Hickerson replied they had not had the fee waived in the past.
- Peterson stated he felt it was a good idea.
- Krause stated to the Commission that the Planning Board would be informed of the Commission's views through the minutes of the meeting.

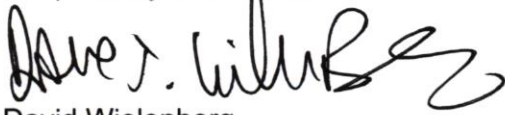
UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETINGS

- Thursday, June 25, 2026 5:30 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by **Lemmer**, seconded by **Olderman**, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at **5:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Wielenberg", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Wielenberg
Compliance Inspector & Site Analyst

PC Minutes approved and attested by:  _____
Planning Commission Representative